



State of Arizona  
Department of Education

Tom Horne  
Superintendent of  
Public Instruction

Memorandum

January 18, 2005  
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To: Child and Adult Care Food Program Centers

From: Mary Szafranski, Deputy Associate Superintendent  
Health and Nutrition Services

Melissa Steinle, Director  
Child and Adult Care Food Program

Subject: Determining eligibility for military families in the Child Nutrition Programs

This memo clarifies Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) policy about income eligibility for those households that include deployed military personnel engaged in long-term military campaigns overseas.

**Background**

In October 1991 during the military campaign "Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm," FNS Child Nutrition Division (CND) issued guidance related to the treatment of military income. Subsequently, in February 2003, two additional memoranda were issued that addressed the treatment of military income for the military campaign Operation Enduring Freedom/Noble Eagle. Prompted by the deployment of US military forces in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, this memorandum is being issued to establish policy as it applies to this and future military deployments in recognition that:

- military deployments are initiated with little or no advance warning, and
- each deployment receives a unique designation to distinguish it from any other deployment or campaign.

**Current Policy**

Under current policy, household members who are *temporarily absent* from their household are considered household members, and their income is included with other household income when officials make eligibility determinations. However, when calculating household size, officials do not count members who are away for an *extended period of time*. Furthermore, when calculating

a household's total income, officials only include that portion of the absent individual's earnings that he or she makes available to the household.

### **Policy for Deployed Service Members**

FNS has established an exception to the above policy. Institutions may use this exception when determining the income and size of households containing deployed military personnel. The exception will remain in effect until legislation or additional policy guidance supersedes it.

Under the new policy, when reviewing an income application, staff should include deployed service members when calculating household size, and should consider those service persons to be *temporarily absent*. The family should be instructed to only include the portion of the deployed service member's earnings that he or she makes available to the remaining members of the household on the income application.

FNS' new policy makes special accommodations for

- free and reduced price meal eligibility determinations,
- tier I day care home determinations, and
- meal benefits for children temporarily residing with their day care home provider.

### **Child and Adult Care Food Program**

An institution would instruct families to include the names and income of deployed service members on their income application. The determining official for a childcare center would count the service member as part of the household in establishing qualification for free or reduced price meals. The determining official for a child care home sponsoring organization would count the service member as part of the household in establishing a daycare home provider's eligibility for tier I reimbursement rates.

Deployment of a parent or guardian may also affect the eligibility of a child who temporarily resides with a day care home provider to receive meals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Although the child may live with the provider while the service member is deployed, the child would not be considered a "provider's own" child. In this special situation, the child would continue to participate in the meal service as a nonresidential participant. To claim reimbursement for program meals, the day care home provider must have power of attorney, custody, or an agreement established by the military to provide residential care to the child.

Please feel free to contact your program specialist if you have further questions.

Kenny Barnes	602.364.1070	Tracey Nissen	602.542.1550
Suzanne Callor	520.628.6775	Elsa Ramirez	520.628.6774
Caredy Cochran	602.542.8716		
Dean Kinnoin	602.364.0141		
Jennifer Leftwich	602.364.0161		